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HONDURAS

SNAPSHOT

Photography: Capturing Perceptions of Fear

Images generating insecurity: Fear on the walls



Source: Photo contest participant, organized by Hazte Notar

“For Hazte Notar, the biggest result is the perception change among the boys and girls towards the police; youth expressed gratitude to the police for looking out for the communities. This change extended into this activity’s operational team, who has now formed an alliance with the police and community to focus their actions in security.”

Telling Our Story

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Honduras Convive! grantee, Hazte Notar, a youth movement interested in political issues, citizen participation, and governance, organized photo-training sessions, and a photography contest for youth: “Photo-Shutter: Breaking Violence through Images”. The grantee had the challenge of entering one of the highest conflict communities in Tegucigalpa: La Travesía in San Miguel, with the purpose of engaging youth in photography as a mode of expression. Hazte Notar worked with photography as a channel for youth to express the violence and risk in their community and promote non-violent alternatives. Hazte Notar trained 100 student participants (57 girls and 43 boys) from the Ramón Montoya Cerrato and Carlos Roberto Flores schools. Honduras Convive! promoted the youth’s work in a photo exhibition at the Seventh Recreovía for Peace in Tegucigalpa, and at the Ramón Montoya Cerrato and Carlos Roberto Flores schools.

The youth participants were trained in various technical themes, including: human rights, citizen participation, culture of non-violence, and photography. This last theme was cross-cutting, and encouraged participants to focus their photographs on images that demonstrated negative influences and effects of violence on their communities’ development. This activity motivated youth to serve as change agents in their community through training, presence, and action through photography. Participants identified 17 aspects or behaviors that increase perceptions of fear present in their communities, including: extortion, drug trafficking, territorial conflicts between gangs, urban pollution, verbal aggression, and youth addiction.

Throughout the training sessions and competition, police were present and interacted with the youth participants, demonstrating a significant achievement in the community. During the events, interaction with the police was perceived positively among the youth and their families, successfully reducing a common fear toward police authorities. Moreover, police completed the culture of non-violence training, and evaluated the risks youth face on a daily basis. The police successfully formed a committee with school authorities and parents, to address these identified risks. Following the participatory model of the photo contest, youth participants and the committee have identified a second activity: a clean-up campaign in a local cemetery, an area considered insecure in the community. Youth participants from the photo contest will build their confidence as change agents in the community, and work with the committee and police to reduce insecurity in the area.